

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-62 (Canceled).

63. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);
- the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other consumer user(s) that may be desirous to said first user;
- the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item, the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user; and
- the electronic barter system communicating a request to the consumer user who listed the desired item that the consumer user who listed the desired item surrender said desired item.

64. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the system maintains a balance between the combined barter credit of all items of inventory and the total barter credit of all consumer users combined.

65. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the balance is maintained such that any time an item is removed from the inventory of the system, the equivalent amount of barter credit must also be removed from one or more consumer users.

66. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 64, wherein the balance is maintained by a removed inventory item being replaced by one or more items of combined equivalent value in barter credit.

67. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 64, wherein the balance is maintained by a removed inventory item being replaced by one or more items of equivalent or greater value in barter credit wherein, if greater, the excess barter credit is provided to one or more consumer users.

68. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

69. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein said system further provides one or more incentives to a consumer user who purchases an item and lists said item.

70. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein said item is a new or used item purchased from the system.

71. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein said purchased item must be listed within a predetermined time after purchase.

72. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is monetary.

73. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is the reduction in the cost of an item for sale.

74. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is a gift certificate.

75. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is barter credit.

76. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein acquiring an item will neither dilute nor enhance the value of the barter credit of users not involved in said acquisition.

77. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit a consumer user must use to acquire an item is the same amount of barter credit provided to the consumer user who listed said item.

78. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit provided to a consumer user for listing items is placed into an account for said consumer user.

79. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 78, wherein the barter credit used by a consumer user to acquire an item is deducted from said consumer user's account.

80. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit provided for listing an item is determined by the system depending on one or more of said item's characteristics.

81. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 80, wherein said characteristics are determined by reference to one or more databases.

82. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 80, wherein at least one factor used to determine said barter credit is information indicative of the quality of said item.

83. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein all items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

84. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein certain items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

85. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein items are listed by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

86. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein items are listed by reference to the Universal Product Code.

87. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to consumer users only one available item of each particular kind.

88. (Original) The method of claim 87, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

89. (Original) The method of claim 87, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

90. (Original) The method of claim 87, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one listed.

91. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of tangible and intangible forms of movies, music and writings.

92. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are intangible.

93. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein consumer users enter items into said inventory by choosing from items in one or more databases.

94. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein consumer users are not permitted to input the attributes of an item they list.

95. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein consumer users are permitted to input certain attributes of an item they list.

96. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 63, wherein users choose which attributes they may input of an item they list.

97. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was listed and said item has not been acquired by a consumer user, said item is removed from the system.

98. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was listed and said item has not been acquired by a consumer user, the barter credit provided is reduced for said item.

99. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 98, wherein said the amount by which said barter credit is reduced is removed from one or more consumer users.

100. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 98, wherein the system reduces said barter credit for said item.

101. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 98, wherein the system requires the consumer user who entered said item to reduce said barter credit.

102. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the system permits a consumer user to list an item wherein said consumer user may allow other users to choose whether to purchase said item or to use barter credit to acquire said item.

103. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 102, wherein the system sets the purchase price for said item as a constant determined by the system multiplied by the barter credit for said item.

104. (Canceled).

105. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 102, wherein, if an item is purchased, the barter credit which was provided for said item when said item was listed is removed from one or more consumer users.

106. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 102, wherein, if an item is purchased, the barter credit which was provided for said item when said item was listed is removed from the consumer user who listed said item.

107. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 106, wherein if the consumer user who listed said item does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said consumer user must list one or more items of equal or greater barter credit value of said item, wherein if greater, the excess barter credit will be provided to said consumer user.

108. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 106, wherein if said consumer user does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said user forfeits the purchase price.

109. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) The method of claim 106, wherein if said consumer user does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said consumer user forfeits a portion of the purchase price to the extent the barter credit removed is less than the barter credit provided when said item was listed.

110. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein listing an item creates no immediate obligation on the part of the consumer user to surrender said item.

111. (Canceled).

112. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein a consumer user's unused barter credit is not required to be equal to the combined barter credit of all inventory items listed by said consumer user which have not been surrendered.

113. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the system determines when the consumer user must surrender an item.

114. (Canceled).

115. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein a consumer user's unused barter credit is transferred to the system when said consumer user's account is closed.

116. The method of claim 63, wherein the system is Internet based.

117. (Canceled).

118. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

119. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

120. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

121-187 (Canceled).

188. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);

the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;

the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;

the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item, the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user;

wherein the electronic barter system determines at least one condition under which a consumer user must give up possession of an item; and

the electronic barter system communicating a request to the consumer user who listed the desired item that the consumer user who listed the desired item surrender said desired item under the at least one condition that was determined by the electronic barter system.

189. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein the barter system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to consumer users only one available item of each particular kind.

190. (New) The method of claim 189, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

191. (New) The method of claim 189, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

192. (New) The method of claim 189, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

193. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the consumer user to surrender said item.

194. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein there is more than one inventory.

195. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein a consumer user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said consumer user which have not been surrendered.

196. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said consumer user's account is closed.

197. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein the electronic barter system is Internet based.

198. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

199. (New) The method of claim 188, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

200. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;

- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);

- the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;

- the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;

- the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user;

- wherein the electronic system determines when a consumer user must give up possession of an item; and

wherein a consumer user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said consumer user which have not been surrendered.

201. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein the electronic barter system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to consumer users only one available item of each particular kind.

202. (New) The method of claim 201, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

203. (New) The method of claim 201, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

204. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

205. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the user to surrender said item.

206. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein there is more than one inventory.

207. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said consumer user's account is closed.

209. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein the system is Internet based.

210. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

211. (New) The method of claim 200, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

212. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);
- the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other consumer user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;
- the first user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item;
- the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user; and
- where a consumer user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said user which have not been surrendered.

213. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein the electronic barter system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to users only one available item of each particular kind.

214. (New) The method of claim 213, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

215. (New) The method of claim 213, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

216. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

217. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the user to surrender said item.

218. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein there is more than one inventory.

219. The method of claim 212, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the electronic system when said consumer user's account is closed.

220. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein the system determines when a consumer user must give up possession of an item.

221. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein the system is Internet based.

222. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

223. (New) The method of claim 212, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

224. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

a consumer user entering one or more items to be swapped into an inventory of an electronic barter system, wherein only items listed in one or more lookup databases may be entered;

the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);

the electronic barter system identifying to a first consumer user at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system that may be desirable to said first consumer user, wherein the electronic barter system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to the first user only one available item of each particular kind, where the particular kind is determined by reference to said one or more lookup databases and where all items of a particular kind are assigned the same number of credits;

the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;

the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item; and

the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user.

225. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

226. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

227. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the consumer user to surrender said item.

228. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein there is more than one inventory.

229. (New) The method of claim 225, wherein a user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said consumer user which have not been surrendered.

230. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein a consumer user may acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that said other user acquire any item from said consumer user.

231. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said consumer user's account is closed.

235. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein the electronic barter system is Internet based.

233. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein communication between said consumer users and said electronic barter system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

234. (New) The method of claim 224, wherein communication between said consumer users and said electronic barter system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

235. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);
- the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;
- the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item, wherein said first consumer user may acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that said other consumer user acquire any item from said first consumer user.

236. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein the system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to consumer users only one available item of each particular kind.

237. (New) The method of claim 236, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

238. (New) The method of claim 236, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

239. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

240. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the consumer user to surrender said item.

241. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein there is more than one inventory.

242. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein a consumer user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said consumer user which have not been surrendered.

243. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said consumer user's account is closed.

244. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein the system is Internet based.

245. (New) The method of claim 235, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

246. (New) The method of claim 238, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

247. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);
- the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other consumer user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;
- the first user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item, the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user; and
- wherein said method comprises the electronic barter system estimating the cost of postage required to ship the item.

248. (New) A method according to claim 247, wherein said method further comprises the system notifying the consumer user as to the cost of postage required to ship the item.

249. (New) A method according to claim 247, wherein said method further comprises compensating the user for at least a portion of the cost of postage required to ship the item.

250. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

- a first consumer user listing item(s) on the electronic barter system;
- the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);

the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other consumer user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;

the first user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;

the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item, the electronic barter system permitting the first consumer user to acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that the other consumer user acquire any item from the first consumer user; and

the electronic system monitoring user compliance with at least one consumer user obligation; and the system determining whether the consumer user may continue using the system in response to said monitoring.

251. (New) A method according to claim 250, wherein said step of monitoring consumer user compliance comprises monitoring whether the consumer user has shipped an item of at least a specified minimum quality.

252. (New) A method according to claim 250, wherein said step of monitoring consumer user compliance comprises monitoring whether the consumer user has shipped an item in timely fashion.

253. (New) A method of operating an electronic barter system for facilitating consumer to consumer bartering transactions, comprising:

a first consumer user entering one or more items to be swapped into an inventory of an electronic barter system, wherein only items listed in one or more lookup databases may be entered;

the electronic barter system determining and awarding to said first consumer user an amount of barter credit for said listed item(s);

the electronic barter system identifying at least one item that has been listed on said electronic barter system by other consumer user(s) that may be desirous to said first consumer user;

the first consumer user selecting a desired item via the electronic barter system;
the electronic barter system permitting at least a portion of said barter credit to be used by said first consumer user toward the acquisition of said desired item;
wherein the electronic barter system communicates a request to the consumer user who listed the desired item that the consumer user who listed the desired item surrenders said desired item;
wherein a consumer user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said consumer user which have not been surrendered;
wherein said first consumer user may acquire an item from another consumer user where it is not required that said other consumer user acquire any item from said first consumer user;
wherein said method comprises the electronic barter system estimating the cost of postage required to ship the item; and
wherein the electronic system monitors consumer user compliance with at least one consumer user obligation; and the system determines whether the consumer user may continue using the system in response to said monitoring.

254. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein the system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to consumer users only one available item of each particular kind.

255. (New) The method of claim 254, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

256. (New) The method of claim 254, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

257. (New) The method of claim 254, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

258. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the consumer user to surrender said item.

259. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein there is more than one inventory.

260. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein a consumer user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said user's account is closed.

261. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein the system is Internet based.

262. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

263. (New) The method of claim 253, wherein communication between said consumer users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.